



LOS ANGELES RAMS AND THE BLK ORIGINALS
DEBUT SHORT FILM ‘KINGFISH: THE STORY OF
KENNY WASHINGTON’ IN CELEBRATION OF BLACK
HISTORY MONTH

Kingfish: The Story of Kenny Washington is live on Rams’ digital channels including therams.com/kingfish, [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#)

Rams hosted film premiere on Wednesday, February 15 at The Miracle Theater in Inglewood, California

LOS ANGELES, FEBRUARY 16, 2023 - The Los Angeles Rams are celebrating Black History Month with the debut of the powerful short film ***Kingfish: The Story of Kenny Washington***, produced alongside creative marketing agency [The BLK Originals](#) and award-winning video production company [Loyd Visuals](#). This inspiring docustyle short film tells the story of Kenny Washington, who was the first Black player to be signed by a National Football League (NFL) team in the modern era and ended a 12-year ban on Black players in the league.

On March 21, 1946, the Rams broke the color barrier in the NFL with the signing of

Washington. During his time at UCLA, Washington was the first All-American in school history and played alongside Jackie Robinson, who was the first African American to play Major League Baseball (MLB) in the modern era. Washington played for the Rams for three seasons and still holds the team record for longest run from scrimmage with his 92-yard rushing touchdown. After his football career, Washington appeared in several films, including *The Jackie Robinson Story*. Washington also served as a Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) officer for several years. He died in 1971.

Yesterday, February 15, the Rams hosted a film premiere in Inglewood's historic downtown at The Miracle Theater. ***Kingfish: The Story of Kenny Washington is live now on the Rams' digital channels including therams.com/kingfish, [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#).***

"The story of Kenny Washington and his timeless impact on our game and all of professional sports has often been overlooked," said **Kevin Demoff**, Chief Operating Officer of the Los Angeles Rams. "Kenny's inspirational determination and commitment to leading through adversity set the standard for the Los Angeles Rams. Following the 75th anniversary of him reintegrating the NFL, we wanted to shine a light on this legend and his legacy with this film. Kenny's pioneering role in NFL history should be celebrated and never forgotten."

Kingfish: The Story of Kenny Washington gives an account of Washington's football journey from bringing Abraham Lincoln High School two championships in both baseball and football to dominating the gridiron at UCLA alongside Jackie Robinson and Woody Strode to breaking the color line in the NFL when he signed to the Los Angeles Rams after pressure from the public and Black press. The film not only chronicles Washington's career – which inspired change in other

professional sports leagues and broke barriers – but it particularly focuses on the

impact Washington made by sticking to his truth in the face of adversity and his legacy that has paved the way for the next generation of leaders, giants and heroes.

The film is a dynamic narrative of scripted scenes shot at Inglewood's Hilltop Coffee + Kitchen and SoFi Stadium, featuring Inglewood-native and rapper **D Smoke** as well as previous Watts Rams participants **Daryl Jamerson** and **Noah Williams**, mixed with documentary footage and interviews. In addition, Rams front office staff, North East Lincoln Rams, Watts Rams and members of Washington's family made cameo appearances in the film.

Kingfish: The Story of Kenny Washington features interviews from Rams defensive coordinator **Raheem Morris** and Rams Legends – Pro Football Hall of Fame wide receiver **Isaac Bruce**, Pro Football Hall of Fame running back **Marshall Faulk**, and Rams all-time leading rusher and three-time Pro Bowl running back **Steven Jackson**. In addition, Kenny Washington's daughter, **Karin Washington-Cohen**, grandson, **Kraig Washington**, and granddaughter, **Kysa Washington**, help tell his story.

"My family and I are so pleased that my father's story is being told," said **Karin Washington-Cohen**. "It is a part of history, not just sports history. We are thrilled that the world will get to know how great of an athlete he was, and how he achieved so much in spite of the disadvantages facing Black people in those times."

The film was created by the Los Angeles Rams in partnership with The BLK Originals, a Black-owned creative agency that specializes in genuine storytelling through research, ideation and design. The BLK Originals was founded by **Sam**

Hoggs and Jasmine Aston. The Rams and BLK Originals worked with Black-

owned production company Loyd Visuals' CEO and Executive Producer, **Khaleel Loyd**, Head of Production, **Maleek Loyd**, and Brand Marketing Manager, **Najm Loyd**, to creatively develop the docustyle short film memorializing Kenny Washington's legacy.

"The true significance of this project is sharing the inspirational story of Mr. Washington on a large scale for future generations," said **Sam Hoggs**, Co-Founder and CEO of The BLK Originals. "We are beyond honored to be in a position to tell African American stories with authenticity. To be trusted by the Rams, an organization that not only gave Mr. Washington an opportunity but our company one as well, speaks to their core values. We hope this project honors our ancestors whose stories have been overlooked and undertold. We want *Kingfish: The Story of Kenny Washington* to encourage all to dig deep into history and shine a light on other African American men and women who have paved the way."

"Mr. Washington's story is one of triumph, resilience, and overcoming adversity— it is the epitome of lifting while you climb," said **Khaleel Loyd**, CEO and Executive Producer of Loyd Visuals. "We are honored to share the Kingfish's legacy through digital storytelling, and we have taken great pride in ensuring his story is told with integrity and accuracy. I am grateful to have worked alongside The BLK Originals as I believe collaboration among Black-owned agencies is essential, and I appreciate the intentionality of the LA Rams as they entrusted Black storytellers with this project. I am confident audiences will recognize that like so many of our ancestors, Mr. Washington ran so we would have the freedom to soar to new heights."

The debut of *Kingfish: The Story of Kenny Washington* is accompanied by the release of a t-shirt designed by The BLK Originals, inspired by the look and feel of

the film. The t-shirt is available for purchase at auctions.thelarams.com. All proceeds

from the merchandise sale will benefit the Los Angeles Rams Foundation.

This film builds on the work the Los Angeles Rams have done to celebrate Kenny Washington's impact on the organization and the NFL. In January 2022, the Rams launched their "pLAYmakers" program, which recognizes 13 Angelenos each year for their efforts to fight injustice and pioneer with purpose in their communities as part of the NFL's Inspire Change platform. On Wednesday, the Rams surprised this year's first "pLAYmaker". During the premiere, Kysa Washington, granddaughter of Kenny Washington and Student Athlete Program Coordinator of the National College Resources Foundation, was recognized during the premiere and received a \$5,000 donation from the Los Angeles Rams Foundation.

To further their dedication to preserving Kenny Washington's legacy, last year the Rams created the Kenny Washington Memorial Scholarship, which provides up to four years of financial support and advisement from Fulfillment Fund (FF), a partner of the Los Angeles Rams, for 13 students from low-resourced communities who are among the first in their families to pursue post-secondary education. Each student selected embodies Kenny Washington's core values – perseverance in the face of adversity, dedication to their goals and the Los Angeles community, fortitude through breaking barriers and inspiring others to make a difference.

In addition, the Rams adopted the North East Lincoln Rams (formerly known as the North East Lincoln Tigers), a youth football program coached by Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) officers and serving youth in the Ramona Gardens public housing development in Boyle Heights. The North East Lincoln Rams play their home games at Kenny Washington Stadium at Abraham Lincoln High School, the alma mater of Kenny Washington.

The Rams will include a screening of the film in this month's EVERFI Mental

Wellness session for more than 10,000 students (grades 6-9) throughout all 32 NFL markets. In addition to the partnership with EVERFI, the Rams will look to team up with Los Angeles area schools to host screenings of the film. Schools that are interested in screening the short film for their students can reach out to the team via email at kingfish@rams.nfl.com.

For more information about the Rams' Black History Month efforts, visit www.therams.com/community/black-history-month.

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ABOUT LOS ANGELES RAMS INSPIRE CHANGE

Launched in 2019, [Inspire Change](#) is a league-wide platform that focuses on reducing barriers to opportunity and creating progress in education, economic advancement, community and police relations, and criminal justice reform. The Los Angeles Rams Inspire Change efforts aim to create solutions that address community barriers and highlight stories and moments in Rams' history that have inspired change on and off the field. From Kenny Washington and Woody Strode breaking the NFL color barrier by signing with the Rams in 1946 to former Rams Legend Shack Harris becoming the first Black quarterback to win a playoff game in 1974, the Rams are committed to pioneering with a purpose.

ABOUT THE BLK ORIGINALS

The BLK Originals is a Black-owned creative agency founded by two HBCU graduates. They pride themselves on genuine storytelling through research, ideation and design. Creating solutions that communicate with audiences

authentically and forge partnerships based on trust, not credit. Partners include Meta, Foot Locker and Red Bull to name a few.

ABOUT LOYD VISUALS

Loyd Visuals is an award-winning media production agency with purpose-driven roots. Specializing in documentaries, commercials, and corporate videos, the agency is trusted by global brands while active in local communities. With an objective to amplify minority voices and contribute to diverse representation within media production, Loyd Visuals is led by three brothers who are committed to creating new narratives and industry opportunities. Established in 2016 in Charlotte, NC, the agency has grown its presence and partnerships through a simple philosophy—do great work. Recognized for its ability to consistently deliver premium quality content, Loyd Visuals is empowering its clients around the world to authentically tell their stories. The agency's most notable partnerships include the NFL, Honeywell, and Airbnb among others, and it especially welcomes collaborations with fellow BIPOC-led agencies as they collectively create new opportunities for creatives of color.
